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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/056,511	01/31/2002	Nora B. Aghassi	P-6335.02(CONT)	3592

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EXAMINER

LUDLOW, JAN M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1743

DATE MAILED: 06/09/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

A97

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/056,511	Applicant(s) AGHASSI ET AL.	
	Examiner Jan M. Ludlow	Art Unit 1743	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 June 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
PTO-326 (Rev. 04-01)

Office Action Summary

Part of Paper No. 7

Art Unit: 1743

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating

obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103^o and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

2. Claims 1-2, 4-6, 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brigati.

Art Unit: 1743

Brigati teaches a block 250 for holding slides 10 separated from cover slides 30 by shim 22. Protuberances 146, 148 can be used to hold the cover slide, shim and slide in the block by friction fit, as claimed in, e.g., instant claim 4. The capillary space between the two slides 10, 30 constitutes the instant headspace and the bottom opening the instant injection port. An elastomeric film 64 has openings 66 to contain treatment fluid which is drawn into the headspace by capillarity (figure 3C). The slides and fluids can be contacted in an automated device at stations 13-16 as shown in figure 6. An absorbent can be provided at the end of the slide to remove fluids from the headspace (figure 3D).

Brigati fails to teach a "cassette" or housing surrounding the film and block.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a housing over the contacting stations in order to contain the reagents from outside contaminants, in order to protect technicians from vapors and/or leaks, and/or for other reasons for containing instrumentation as was known in the art at the time the invention was made. With respect to claims 6, 24, it would have been obvious to provide a "cap" or lid or other opening in order to provide access to the contents of the housing for repair, observation, etc. as was known in the art. With respect to the relief port, the gap between the two slides at the edge of the shim allows venting.

3. Claims 1-3, 5-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chianese.

Art Unit: 1743

Chianese teaches a film 10 with reagent containers 22 in holders 20 attached to slide assembly 12 via inlet port 14. Outlet port 26 provides venting to waste. The slide assembly includes sample slide 30, cover slide 28 and spacer 32 defining head space 24. A roller 48, or rollers 66, 68 are provided to move the reagents from the containers to the slide assembly, but other compression means can be used, including a reciprocating platen (instant piston) (col. 4, lines 50-68 and col. 7, lines 1-25). The film can be straight or arcuate (bridge col. 2-3). With respect to claim 18, more than one reagent can be provided simultaneously to mix on contact (col. 5, lines 5-10). Thermal control can be provided (col. 6, line 12). Timing can be controlled by the length of the strip or by microswitches to the roller motors (col. 7, lines 1, 51-52).

Chianese fails to teach a "cassette" or housing surrounding the film and slide assembly.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a housing over the film and slide assembly in order to contain the reagents from outside contaminants, in order to protect technicians from vapors and/or leaks, and/or for other reasons for containing instrumentation as was known in the art at the time the invention was made. With respect to claims 6, 24, it would have been obvious to provide a "cap" or lid or other opening in order to provide access to the contents of the housing for repair, observation, etc. as was known in the art. With respect to the claimed container structure and pressure exerting means, it would have been obvious to provide known alternate containers openable by pressure application and known alternate pressure application means in order to provide the

Art Unit: 1743

containment and release functions taught by Chianese. With respect to claim 7, it would have been obvious to use alternate known joining means for clamping the slide assembly together. With respect to claim 20, it would have been obvious to provide an absorbent in the waste tank in order to draw and/or contain the liquid as was known in the art as indicated by Chianese at col. 1, line 64.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jan M. Ludlow whose telephone number is (703) 308-4039. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 11:30 am - 8:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill A. Warden can be reached on (703) 308-4037. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Jan M. Ludlow
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1743

jml
June 8, 2003